

Human + AI Working Together



Going Beyond
Technology

INNOVATE
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Chapter 7: Are You Ready for Agent First?

Assessing Your Organisation's Readiness for Always-On Personal Agents

Throughout this guide, we have explored Microsoft's vision for Frontier Firms, Human-Agent Teams, digital labour and the technologies that will help power the next generation of work.

We have examined the opportunities presented by Copilot, Agents, Scout, OpenClaw and Autopilot. We have explored the intelligence layer that supports organisational understanding and the governance frameworks required to deploy AI responsibly.

The final question is perhaps the most important.

Is your organisation ready?

Agent First is not a single technology deployment. It is a journey that requires organisations to prepare their people, processes, data, governance and culture for a fundamentally different way of working.

In this chapter, we provide a practical framework for assessing organisational readiness, identifying strengths, addressing gaps and building a roadmap towards Microsoft's Agent First future.



The Future Is Arriving Faster Than Most Organisations Expect

A few years ago, most organisations were still discussing whether Artificial Intelligence would have a meaningful impact on the workplace.

Today, many are deploying Microsoft 365 Copilot, experimenting with AI-powered automation and exploring how agents can support employees.

The pace of change has been extraordinary. Yet the next phase may move even faster.

Microsoft's vision for Agent First organisations, Human-Agent Teams and Frontier Firms is no longer a distant concept. Many of the foundational technologies already exist, while others are rapidly emerging.

This creates an important challenge for leaders. Not whether Agent First will happen. But whether their organisation will be ready.

The organisations that benefit most from AI are unlikely to be those that wait for the technology to mature completely. They will be the organisations that prepare early. The good news is that readiness does not begin with Autopilots or advanced agents. It begins with the foundations many organisations are already building today.

The Five Pillars of Agent First Readiness

Successful Frontier Firms are not created through technology alone. They combine people, process, data, governance and culture. Organisations preparing for Agent First should assess their readiness across five key areas.

People

- Do employees understand AI?
- Are leaders prepared to manage Human-Agent Teams?
- Do teams have the skills required to work alongside digital labour?

Process

- Are business processes clearly defined?
- Can activities be standardised and automated?
- Are responsibilities understood?





Data

- Is organisational knowledge accessible?
- Can information be trusted?
- Are systems connected?

Governance

- Are security, compliance and oversight frameworks in place?
- Can agents operate safely within organisational boundaries?

Culture

- Is the organisation prepared to embrace new ways of working?
- Are employees encouraged to innovate?
- Is there leadership support for change?

Weakness in any one of these areas can slow adoption.

Strength across all five creates the foundation for sustainable success.

Readiness Assessment

Where Are You Today?

Every organisation is at a different stage of the journey. The following maturity model can help assess current readiness.

Level	Characteristics	Questions to Consider
1. Exploring	• AI awareness is growing • Limited experimentation • No formal strategy • Minimal governance	• Have we identified opportunities for AI? • Do leaders understand Microsoft's roadmap? • Are we actively exploring use cases?
2. Piloting	• Microsoft 365 Copilot pilots underway • Initial agent experimentation • Early governance discussions • Growing employee interest	• Are pilot outcomes being measured? • Have we identified quick wins? • Are governance foundations emerging?
3. Adopting	• Copilot deployed more broadly • Departmental agents in use • Defined governance processes • Data strategy developing	• Are agents delivering measurable value? • Do employees trust AI outputs? • Are data foundations improving?
4. Scaling	• Multiple AI solutions deployed • Human-Agent Teams emerging • Strong governance framework • Organisational adoption growing	• Are we coordinating AI investments effectively? • Can we scale successfully? • Are leaders prepared for Agent First?
5. Frontier Firm	• Human-Agent Teams embedded • Digital labour actively supporting services • Organisational intelligence accessible on demand • AI integrated into everyday operations	• How do we continue innovating? • How do we optimise Human-Agent collaboration? • How do we measure long-term impact?

Most organisations today sit between Levels 1 and 3. That is perfectly normal. The objective is not speed. The objective is progress.





Already Using Copilot?

You May Be More Prepared Than You Think

Many organisations assume Agent First requires a completely new technology strategy. In reality, much of the groundwork may already exist.

If you are already:

- Using Microsoft 365 Copilot
- Building solutions in Copilot Studio
- Deploying Power Platform
- Modernising with Microsoft Fabric
- Improving governance through Purview
- Strengthening identity with Entra

Then you are already building important foundations. Agent First is not a replacement for these investments. It is the next stage of their evolution.

Today's Copilot deployment may become tomorrow's Human-Agent Team. Today's data modernisation project may become tomorrow's intelligence layer. Today's governance programme may become tomorrow's agent control framework. The journey has already started.





Data Readiness Checklist

If Chapter 4 taught us anything, it is this: AI is only as valuable as the information supporting it.

Before introducing advanced agents, organisations should assess their data readiness.

Ask Yourself:

- ☐ Do we know where critical information is stored?
- ☐ Can employees easily access organisation knowledge?
- ☐ Are permissions managed effectively?
- ☐ Is data trusted and reliable?
- ☐ Are systems connected?
- ☐ Have we established information governance policies?
- ☐ Can AI access the information required to create value?

The stronger these foundations become, the more effective future agents will be.

Governance Readiness Checklist

Security and trust remain critical.

Leaders should consider:

- ☐ Do we have an AI governance framework?
- ☐ Are roles and responsibilities defined?
- ☐ Have we established approval processes?
- ☐ Can agent activity be monitored?
- ☐ Do we understand compliance obligations?
- ☐ Are security controls aligned with AI adoption?
- ☐ Have we defined acceptable levels of autonomy?

Governance should enable innovation, not prevent it. The goal is responsible adoption.





People Readiness Checklist

Technology adoption succeeds when people succeed.

Questions for leaders:

- ☐ Do employees understand AI?
- ☐ Have we provided training?
- ☐ Are leaders confident discussing Agent First?
- ☐ Do teams understand how roles may evolve?
- ☐ Are employees encouraged to experiment safely?
- ☐ Have we addressed concerns about AI?

Agent First is as much a people transformation as a technology transformation.

The Question Every Leader Should Ask

Many organisations focus on a single question:

"How can we use AI?"

The Frontier Firm asks a different question.

"How should work change when intelligent agents become part of the workforce?"

That question shifts the conversation. It moves from technology adoption to organisational transformation. It focuses attention on outcomes rather than tools. And it encourages leaders to think beyond today's productivity gains towards tomorrow's operating model.





Key Takeaways

Agent First readiness is about more than technology. Success depends on people, process, data, governance and culture working together. Most organisations are already building important foundations through Copilot, Copilot Studio, Power Platform, Fabric and Microsoft 365.

Data readiness and governance readiness are critical success factors. The journey towards Agent First should be approached incrementally through pilots, learning and continuous improvement. The organisations that thrive in the next era of work will not necessarily be those with the most advanced technology.

They will be those that prepare their people, processes and culture for Human-Agent Teams. The future belongs to organisations that are ready to work differently.

How CPS Can Help

Wherever you are on your AI journey, CPS can help you assess your readiness, identify opportunities and build a practical roadmap towards Microsoft's Agent First future. From strategy and governance to adoption and implementation, we provide end-to-end support tailored to your organisation.

CPS | Microsoft Partner of the Year – Copilot & Agents

**AI Strategy | Copilot | Copilot Studio & Agents | Agent Factory | Microsoft Fabric |
Dynamics 365 | Power Platform**

Get in touch via hello@cps.co.uk



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